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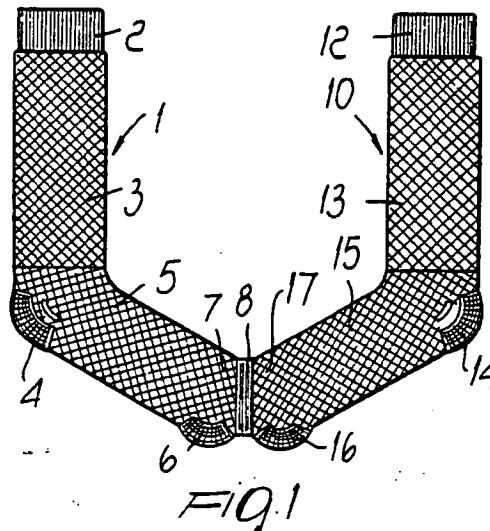
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(54) **Method for manufacturing hosiery items and knitting and stitching machines.**

(57) A method for manufacturing hosiery items, termed "top-to-top" method, and the related modified knitting and stitching machines. The method includes the following steps: knitting a first hosiery item (1) starting from a top (2) down to a toe (7); knitting at least one row of trim (8) at the end of the toe (7); knitting a second hosiery item (10) at the end of the row of trim (8) starting from a second toe (17) up to a second top (12); separating and stitching the first and second hosiery items (1, 10) initially joined by the trim row (8) by means of a specifically modified stitching machine. The stitching machine includes two independent stitching units (36, 37) which are fed by a common conveyor (31) which is provided with a cutter and with diverging traction means. Top-to-top knitting can be performed with appropriately modified mechanically-programmed machines or with electronically programmed machines. The advantage of the method is that it considerably increases productivity and almost completely eliminates the waste of excess thread that occurs with current operations for stitching the toes of individually knitted hosiery items.



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